(b) the number of persons provided employment during this period; and

(c) the details of the targets fixed regarding setting up Small Scale Industries in the rural areas of country in the current year?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) Small scale industries (SSIs), as defined under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951, are set up by individual entrepreneurs and not by the Government. Hence information on amounts spent on setting up SSI units is neither collected nor available for the period mentioned in the question or otherwise.

(b) It is estimated that about 12,63,907 persons have been provided employment in the registered SSI units during the first three years of the Tenth Five Year Plan.

(c) As stated in reply to part (a) of the question, SSI units are set up by individual entrepreneurs. Therefore, the Government fixes no target for setting up SSI units in the country. However, under the Rural Employment Generation Programme (REGP), the target is to sanction assistance for setting up village industries in the rural areas of the country with a view to generating 5.5 lakh additional employment opportunities during 2005-06. Similarly, under the Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY), implemented in both rural and urban areas, to provide self-employment opportunities to the educated youth, the target of new units to be assisted during 2005-06 is 2.50 lakh, for creation of 3.75 lakh new employment opportunities.

Facility through satellite network

481. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) how far Indian Space Research Organisation's satellites have contributed in improving tele-communication, tele-education, tele-medicine, etc. facilities in rural and remote areas of the country;

(b) whether any utilization study has been made for the benefits being derived at the grass root level;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) by when the entire country would get optimum facilities through a network of satellites?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) to (d) ISRO's satellites have significantly contributed in facilitating development of rural and remote areas in various fronts.

(i) INSAT satellites have extended television coverage to over 90% of the country's population.

(ii) Telecommunication network has been extended to remote/rural areas through INSAT satellites by Department of Telecommunication by using about 370 satellite earth stations/VSATs and emergency communications needs in remote places like Andaman & Nicobar Islands have been met using portable satellite communication terminals.

(iii) Satellite based telemedicine facilities have been established in 87 district hospitals serving rural/remote areas including Jammu & Kashmir, North-Eastern States and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

(iv) Under EDUSAT programme, high quality education is being imparted through satellites to more than 800 primary schools in the predominantly tribal district of Chamarajnagar in Karnataka. 100 satellite terminals are being used for Technical University education in Karnataka, 2000 terminals in schools, colleges and polytechnics in Andhra Pradesh, 75 terminals in Maharashtra for Open University, 25 terminals for Technical University in Madhya Pradesh and 20 terminals for university education in Goa.

(v) A study on the impact of a satellite-based developmental communication project conducted in Jhabua, a tribal district of Madhya Pradesh published in 2000 indicated benefits to the rural population in the area of health awareness, agricultural practices, cottage industry, fishery, woman and child welfare etc. About 60% of viewers reported gains in health awareness and about 40% reported gains in health practices.

(vi) A study conducted in rural Karnataka indicated a significant cost savings resulted from use of telemedicine connectivity via satellite. In general, it was observed that about 90% of the patients did not

have to travel to specialty hospitals in cities and were treated in their own places.

(vii) Under the INSAT system, the target of 175 transponders, which were projected based on the requirements for communication, will be met by the end of Tenth Plan period through a constellation of 10 satellites.

Unemployed Engineers/Diploma Holders

482. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the number of engineers and diploma holders growing day by day and they are now searching jobs in various fields;

(b) if so, Government's response thereto; and

(c) whether Government are considering any proposal to offer various departmental small contract/project works to unemployed educated engineers/Diploma holders so that these Youth can start their own business and earn enough money; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHAR RAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The additional employment opportunities proposed to be created during Tenth Plan will help them in getting employment.

(c) At present, there is no such proposal under consideration in the Ministry of Labour & Employment.

(d) Government is targeting creation of around 5 crore employment opportunities during the Tenth Plan period. These will help the unemployed engineers and diploma holders also.

Execution of MPLAD Scheme

483. SHRI URKHAO GWRA BRAHMA: Will the Minister of STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the execution of MPLAD Scheme are always delayed;